

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.]

OPEN LETTER TO ALUMNÆ ASSOCIATIONS

DISCUSSING organization, I once heard a clever man say that "it took ten years to make a constitution, and then it was not satisfactory." Such being the case, we need not be disheartened at finding flaws in the government of some of our nursing bodies. A weak spot which strikes me as needing correction is our common practice of sending new delegates every year to the Associated Alumnæ. Most of us thought in the beginning that every new delegate was one more enlightened, but what has been the result? Every year the Associated Alumnæ meetings are composed almost wholly of strangers, strange to one another, strange to the work done before, and, unhappily, too often strange to the work in hand, consequently a greater part of the time is consumed in getting acquainted with the work previously done.

It is an almost universal sentiment among delegates that if they might come again they would be able to work more intelligently. This being true, why do we not send our delegates for two years instead of one, and where a society is entitled to several have them changed at different times? I think the best illustration of our faulty precedent has been in the question of the Associated Alumnæ ownership of the JOURNAL. I am convinced that if the meetings in the past had been composed of a sufficient number of the same persons the Associated Alumnæ would now be the owner, but instead we have new delegates every year whom we have sent with little or no instruction of how to act in the matter, and in this fashion, with desultory and unsatisfactory discussion, this vital subject has been dragged along for five years. Meanwhile the exigencies of business compelled that the JOURNAL be incorporated, which had to be done by a stock company, and which has grown to such dimensions that only by a tremendous concerted action can the Associated Alumnæ become its purchaser, all of which I believe would have been averted had a few people been allowed to act as delegates for two years or more. Is the subject not worth some discussion?

ISABEL McISAAC,
304 Honore Street, Chicago.

DEAR EDITOR: As I glance over the part of our JOURNAL each month which is devoted to reports from societies I find myself wondering whether it is worth our while, as alumnæ, to send in such detailed reports of local happenings which have no general interest. I realize that these items are intensely interesting to those whom they concern, but is not a local alumnæ report, rather than a national magazine, the place for them?

Possibly these local items help to keep up the interest in the JOURNAL of a large number of subscribers. I do not know. I am asking for information. It would seem that we would all rather see the space now given up to these details

devoted to articles of greater general interest. I do not mean that these reports should be omitted, but they might be confined to items which are of real interest to the nursing world, of progress made, of suggestions helpful to others, etc., etc. We might try to cultivate among ourselves a spirit of contributing only that which will be of use to us all and save you part of the pruning, which must be at best a delicate task. Yours sincerely,

L.

DEAR EDITOR: THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING, "Seasickness," on page 454, JOURNAL of March, contains what I consider rather drastic treatment.

I should judge the bowels would be so loose at the end of the tenth day that sailing would have to be postponed. At sea one needs to be in control of their functions, rather than have their functions control them.

I would suggest that any nurses planning for the Berlin trip be very wary how they physic themselves before sailing.

I have been on the water for coast trips quite frequently, but have crossed the Atlantic only twice. Was not seasick. I was seasick on one coast trip, I think, because my companion in the stateroom was much distressed. Since that experience I have tried to prepare by taking *Ammonii bromid.*, gr. v, t. i. d., for three days previous. I think this is preferable to the *sodium bromide*, as the former has a little stimulating effect.

Five grains is quite sufficient for one who does not habitually take drugs. I find the *Ammonii bromid.* tranquillizes my nerves so that I do not care whether doors bang or not.

The captain on the Atlantic liner said seasickness begins in the ankles, and if one can get the proper swing, and preserve the equilibrium, one would not have to pay tribute to Neptune.

I hope all the nurses who go to Berlin will have a very good time. I wish them all *bon voyage*.

BOSTON.

DEAR EDITOR: I have just received a copy of the constitution and by-laws of the Massachusetts State Nurses' Association, together with a letter from a prominent officer of that association drawing my attention to the fact that they had endeavored to make their constitution and by-laws as *simple* as possible, and saying that their association was progressing most favorably with it as a guide. On reading over the clause referring to membership I note with much interest that no mention is made anywhere of *alumnæ* associations or any societies of nurses other than the county societies, which are branches of the State association.

For the New York State Nurses' Association to adopt similar by-laws concerning membership may be a "radical change," but in view of the fact that the by-laws of the New York State Association were adopted in 1902, revised in 1903, and are to be revised again in 1904, it would seem that some radical change would not be out of place, also that much valuable time and energy might be saved by adopting by-laws of a more permanent character.

As far as *alumnæ* associations are concerned, I do not think that anyone, least of all myself, has ever thought, much less said, that "their days of usefulness are over," but I maintain that nothing can be gained and much unnecessary complication is added by their recognition in the State and county societies.

For inter-State affiliation as a means of establishing reciprocity, here again